Recovery of revenue from unauthorised wireless users

1815. SHRI S. RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have* failed to recover revenue amounting to Rs. 2481 crore from 6435 unauthorised wireless users including VSNL for periods ranging from one to eighteen years;

(b) whether it is also a fact that no action, as provided in the India Telegraph Act, was taken against such users;

(c) if so, the reasons for not taking any action;

(d) what action has been taken to recover the dues; and

(e) the results thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Only an amount of Rs. 16.17 crores is to be recoverd from licensees towards licence renewal fees.

(b) and (c) A licence which is not renewed stands cancelled.

(d) and (e) Even though the onus of renewal of licence lies on the licencees, notices were issued for recovery of dues. An amount of Rs. 3.65 crores has since been received.

Out of order public telephones in Gujarat

1816. SHRI BACHANI LEKHRAJ: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of out of order public telephones in the rural areas of Gujarat;

(b) the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to make them functional?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) to (c) The

information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Telephone revenue arrears

1817. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Telephone revenue arrears of DoT have increased as compared to the previous year;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reasons for increase in arrears; and

(d) the steps taken by Government to recover the arrears?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) and (b) The operational arm of DoT became a corporation (Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited) on 1.10.2000 and all the assets (including telephone arrears) and liabilities of DoT were passed on to BSNL. DoT thus no longer has any telephone revenue or revenue arrears on date.

The telephone revenue arrears of the BSNL have increased as follows over the previous year:

Year	Unpaid bills as on 31st March
1999-2000	Rs. 2374 crores Rs.
2000-2001	2803 crores

Note: These are cumulative arreas for 10 years and include bills issued in the month of March, for which payments were still to come in. So the amount billed grows each year, the cumulative arreass are seen to remain at 15-16% of the total billed amount each year.

(c) The reasons for increase in arrears are as follows:

(i) Unwillingness on the part of subscribers to pay the bills.

(ii) Bills issued correctly but perceived by the subscriber as inflated.

(iii) Bills may not reaching subscribers in time.